

ANTIQUITY OF DECORATIVE ART

Strange Sources From Which Pigments Used by Modern Painters Are Derived.

PRESERVATION OF SURFACES.

Crude but Effective Processes Employed by the Egyptians and Greeks of Pliny's Day—Noah Prudently Waterproofed the Ark.

Whether paint was invented in answer to a need for a preservative or to meet a desire for beauty is a question fully as knotty as the ancient one about the relative time of arrival of the chicken or the egg. It was invented, though, and it serves both purposes equally; so whether it is an offspring of mother necessity or an adopted son of beauty remains forever a disputed question.

The first men, cowering under the fierce and glaring suns of the hilly countries, constructed rude huts of wood to shelter them. The perishable nature of these structures caused rapid decay, and it is probable that the occupants, seeking some artificial means of preservation, hit upon the pigments of the earth in their search. It is perhaps natural to suppose that it was the instinct of preservation that led men to the search, although the glories of the sunsets and the beauties of the rainbow may have created a desire to imitate those wonders in their own dwellings.

The earliest record of the application of a preservative to a wooden structure dates from the ark, which was, according to the Bible, "pitched within and without." The pitch was a triumph of preservation whatever it lacked as a thing of beauty.

Decoration applied to buildings first comes to light with ancient Babylon, whose walls were covered with representations of hunting scenes and of combat. These were done in red and the method followed was to paint the scene on the bricks at the time of manufacture, assuring permanence by baking. Strictly speaking, this was not painting so much as it was the earliest manifestation of our own familiar kindsmanship.

The first Hebrew to mention painting is Moses. In the thirty-third chapter of the book of Numbers he instructs the Israelites, "When ye have passed over the Jordan into the land of Canaan, then shall ye drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you and destroy all their pictures."

At later periods the Jews adopted many customs of the peoples who successively obtained power over them and in the apocryphal book of the Maccabees is found this allusion to the art of decorating: "For as the master builder of a new house must care for the whole building, but he that undertaketh to set it out and paint it, will seek out things for the adorning thereof."

Although Homer gives credit to a Greek for the discovery of paint, the allusions to it in the books of Moses, the painted mummy cases of the Egyptians and the decorated walls of Babylon and Thebes fix its origin at a period long antecedent to the Grecian era. The walls of Thebes were painted 1,500 years before the coming of Christ and 900 years before "O'er some his blooming face."

The Greeks recognized the value of painting as a preservative and made use of something akin to it on their ships. Pliny writes of the mode of hulling wharves and painting ships with it after which he continues: "neither the sea, nor the wind, nor the sun can destroy this wood thus protected."

The Romans, being essentially a warlike people, never brought the decoration of buildings to the high plane it had reached with the Greeks. For all that the ruins of Pompeii show many structures whose mural decorations are to fair shape today. The colors used were glaring. A black background was the usual one and the combinations worked thereon red, yellow and blue.

In the early Christian era the use of mosaics for churches somewhat supplanted mural painting. Still, during the reign of Justinian the Church of Saint Sophia was built at Constantinople and its walls were adorned with paintings.

In modern times the uses of paint have come to be as numerous as its myriad shades and tints. Paint is unique in that its name has no synonyms and for it there is no substitute material. Bread is the staff of life, but paint is the life of the staff.

No one thinks of the exterior of a wooden building now except in terms of paint coated. Interiors, too, from painted walls and stained furniture down to the lowliest kitchen utensil, all receive their protective covering. Steel, so often associated with cement reinforcing, is admired before it goes to give solidity to the manufactured stone. The huge girders of the skyscrapers are daubed an ugly but efficient red underneath the surface coat of black. Perhaps the best example of the value of paint on steel is found in the venerable Brooklyn bridge, on which a gang of painters is kept going continually. It is scarce possible to think of a single manufactured article which does not meet paint somewhere in the course of its construction. So has paint grown into the very marrow of our lives.

PAINT AS AN ASSET.

Bankers Say They Lend More Money on Property When Buildings Are Well Painted.

AN INDICATION OF THRIFT.

One Concern Advances 25 Per Cent. More if Repainting Is Done Every Five Years.

Does it pay to paint carefully farm buildings? Does it add to the selling value of a farm when buildings are properly kept up and regularly painted? A careful inquiry of a number of leading bankers in the Mississippi valley, including such states as Iowa, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Indiana and Missouri, reveals the fact that in nearly every case the bankers did not hesitate to say that they would lend all the way from 5 to 50 per cent. more on land where farm buildings were well painted and kept in good condition. They maintain that well kept-up and well painted buildings and fences are an indication of thrift and that the thrifty farmer is a good client, and to him money can be safely loaned. An average of the returns from these bankers shows that the increased loan value because of painted buildings is around 22 per cent.

Some of these bankers make interesting comment. A Michigan concern says that, while not especially prepared to advise definitely in response to this inquiry, the officers would loan more money on farms where buildings were painted than where they were not so treated. This bank also finds that where houses, barns and fences are well taken care of the farm is a profitable proposition, and bankers in general consider the farmer a good client. Another Michigan bank says "farm buildings out of repair and needing paint indicate that the owner is slow pay." Such farms are rated at about one-third of the assessed value for loans. Where the farm buildings are in good shape the rating is one-half. The president of a middle western bank says that when real estate loans are considered, painted buildings are always taken into consideration in making an estimate. The general appearance of the property surrounding the house and barn and also the fields and fences would be carefully observed. He further says that he has no hesitancy in saying that he would absolutely refuse a loan on farms where the buildings were not kept up and well painted. In his judgment, unpainted farm buildings would reduce the loan value at least 25 per cent.

A Minnesota banker says that he is much more willing to loan money where the buildings are well painted. In his particular case he believes that he would loan 20 per cent. more than if the buildings were not properly taken care of. A farmer who will keep his buildings painted takes a much deeper interest in his work than one who does not. Another Minnesota bank says that well painted buildings have resulted in securing from his bank sometimes as high as 25 per cent. more money than where the buildings are not painted. An Ohio concern says that it will loan 25 per cent. more money on a well kept farm where buildings are painted at least once every five years. A southern Illinois bank says that it has no fixed rule about this, but it does make a decided difference when owners of farm lands apply for loans. If the buildings are well painted and thus well preserved the loan rate would not only be cheaper, but the amount of money borrowed would be larger. A northern Illinois bank does not hesitate to say that it would loan fully 50 per cent. more on a farm where buildings were well painted and in good order than where they were not. The vice president, who answers the inquiry, goes on to say: "There probably are many farmers good financially and morally who permit their buildings to remain unpainted, but as a rule the most substantial people who live in the country keep their buildings well painted."

An Iowa bank, through its vice president, states that it would make a difference of at least 25 per cent. in favor of the farm with painted buildings. Another Iowa concern says that it would make a difference of at least 20 per cent.

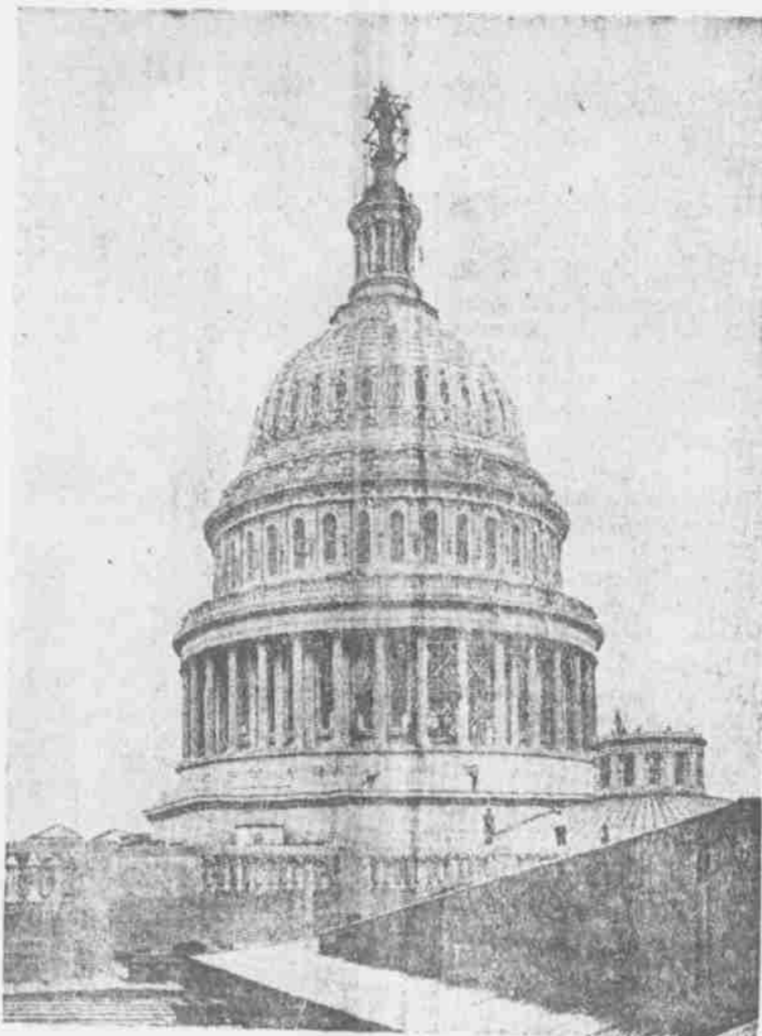
All this being true, it is perfectly evident that it is a good business proposition to keep the farm buildings well painted. They not only look better and are more pleasing to the owner, but the farm would sell to better advantage, the loan value of the property would be greatly increased and the buildings themselves would last much longer and need less repairs.—The American Agriculturist.

PAINT AND ILLITERACY.

Curious Fact Comes to Light That Localities Least Using Books Avoid Paint Also.

Washington, D. C.—A curious fact has been brought to light by the Educational Bureau and the Bureau of Industrial Research here. It is that in the states where illiteracy is most prevalent paint is least used. The paint referred to is the common or barn variety, of course, for the backwoods countries have no need for the finer pigments or facial adornments. It is true, though, that in the sections of all states where white illiteracy is highest painted homes are rare and painted outbuildings and barns are practically unknown. Probably the illiterates do not use paint on their buildings because they do not understand its value as a preservative.

Uncle Sam Sets a Good Example



VIEW OF U. S. CAPITOL DURING PAINTING.

The dome of the United States Capitol at Washington is kept in excellent condition by painting it every few years. For this work forty painters are steadily employed for three months' time. Over five thousand gallons of paint are required for one coat. The reason for painting the Capitol dome at regular intervals is to prevent disintegration of metallic surface.

THE COSMETIC OF THE INANIMATE.

"I am the savior of surfaces.
"I am the world-old preserver.
"Noah knew me, for he pitched the ark within and without.
"The Pharaohs sought me as an adornment for their tombs—their mummies endure because I conserve.
"I am the woad of the ancient Britons: their blue battle hue.
"Because of me the treasures of the Sistine Chapel defy effacement.
"I am the keeper of the antique.
"I am the servant of progress.
"Columbus found me bedecking the savages who watched him plant Ferdinand's banner on the shores of New Spain; and the very sails of his caravels resisted the elements of the West through my aid.
"The pioneers westward wending their way daubed the prairie schooners with my protection.
"I am the royal robes of civilization's monarchs, Steel and Lumber.
"The taut wings of the airplane gleam under my protective veneer.
"The sullen dreadnaught and the homing transport plow the seas impervious to corrosion because of me.
"I waterproofed your agents of destruction, the bullet and the shell.
"Then I drew the mercy of my concealing camouflage over your hospitals.
"I glisten on the homes, and on the barns, and on the cement surfaces.
"Where life is, I am alive.
"Where death and decay set in my absence hastens them.
"And my mission is to preserve.
"Saver of Surface, I am PAINT!"



THE QUINCY MANSION, QUINCY, MASS., BUILT IN 1685.

America's classic example of a clapboard building preserved for over two hundred years by careful and frequent painting. It has secret panels, chimney staircases and hiding places, said to have been used by smugglers. Later the home of great statesmen and of the famous belle, Dorothy Quincy.

SAVE THE SURFACE.
 * Save the surface and you save all. Disintegration and decay are conditions which usually start at the surface of any material. Protection against deterioration or rot of substances, therefore, should begin with care of the exterior. Provided a material does not carry within itself the element of sure decay, proper surface protection will undoubtedly lengthen its life.

THE PAINTER'S BEST FRIEND
 * Of all the many liquid substances which can be used for the binding of paint or dry substances which when dissolved in water are used as vehicles for pigments none fulfills necessary conditions so well as linseed oil, the king of the fixed oil, and, what is of enormous importance, does it so cheaply. It is the painter's best friend because it makes his work satisfactory.

HOW CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLE WAS SAVED

New Process Invented to Preserve Surface of Monolith in Central Park.

HIEROGLYPHS OBLITERATED.

Rigors of Western Climate Caused Khedive's Gift to Disintegrate. Painting Ancient Obelisk With Special Preparation Stayed Decay—Ruined Porticoes Restored.

New Yorkers awoke one morning to find in their breakfast headlines the news that a zealous park employee had discovered signs of disintegration on the surface of the city's most treasured antique—Cleopatra's Needle. Photographs revealed that the monolith was peeling, large pieces of sandstone having fallen from the tall shaft, carrying with them part of the prized hieroglyphs.

London's twin sister of Cleopatra's Needle was reported as resting comfortably and enduringly on the banks of the Thames, and the rival port wondered whether a preparation would be found to stay the attacks of their harsher climate.

Such a preparation was soon forthcoming. A new paint combination as a preservative for stone was invented.

THE OBELISK.

The Obelisk was presented to the city of New York by the Khedive of Egypt.

Commodore Matthew C. Perry, U. S. N., after a three years' effort obtained permission of it and moved it to its present position. At an expense of nearly \$100,000 it was finally swung into position at noon, January 22, 1881.

The height of this monolith from base to tip is 69 feet, 2 inches. The mean diameter of the base, 20 feet, 6 inches, is 2 feet, 8 inches. The entire weight of the monolith is 219 tons. Since it was quarried near the Red Sea it has traversed the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean—a distance of 6,000 miles—proving itself a first rate traveler for one whose age has exceeded thirty-five centuries. In the course of its existence it has seen Pharaohs and has longed to their destinies and Christian struggles, including the long line of Moslem rulers since Caliph Omar, and now, leaving altogether its native land, it stands moaning upon the million dwellers in this metropolis, whose site was unknown to the eastern conqueror at a time when the Obelisk had been in existence for 150,000 years.

By Dr. William Kuckro, chemist of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Many years previous coating with paint had been tried, but the application had not entirely accomplished its purpose. The new painting process, however, proved a success. Disintegration was halted and the damaged parts restored. New York breathed easily again.

PAINT PROTECTION AND ITS ECONOMY.

The preservation of structural materials, which may be obtained through the application of paint, constitutes a most vital means of furthering the conservation of our natural resources. It is, moreover, the most economical method of sustaining the appearance and general upkeep of any community.

A structure coated with sheets of India rubber would not be as well protected from decay as a structure coated with a good oil paint. This is due to the fact that a sheet of rubber is not so durable or as waterproof as a thin dried film of paint. The latter material when applied dries to a continuous elastic film containing finely divided particles of metallic, wear resisting pigments. A square foot of such a film upon a wooden surface costs less than a penny, yet it will beautify and protect a dollar's worth of surface for many years. This is a low rate of insurance.

Dwellings, barns, outbuildings, sheds, posts, fences, stock enclosures, wagons, implements, windmills and other structures, whether of wood, iron or cement, should be preserved, through the use of paint, from rapid decay. High grade paint may be used successfully for all such purposes. Colored paints will be found the most serviceable, the coloring matter in the paint adding from two to three years to the life of the coating.

QUESTIONNAIRE

ANSWERS WHICH WILL SOLVE PERPLEXING PROBLEMS OF THIS RECONSTRUCTION ERA.

Query.—The government has launched an educational campaign to encourage building in order to put more men to work. Would not a similar movement to show how the old structures can be repaired and most economically repaired and made good as new also help?

Answer.—It is learned that such a plan is in effect and is linked directly with the Washington program.

Industry must be turned back from works of war to the ways of peace. Employment must be found, in the meanwhile, for those whose occupation has been interrupted. There is no real surplus of labor in the United States. Rather there is a shortage which would be acute if normal conditions were already restored, and one step towards restoring them will come with resumption of repair work.

Government restrictions, imposed by the necessities of the war program, have for many months just retarded or altogether prevented construction, improvement and repairs. These restrictions are now off, and there is scarcely a town, a city, a factory, a dwelling or a farm that does not reveal a crying need for prompt attention. Nothing delays such instant action, except the feeling that prices are high for the time being and may be lower.

That is not logical. No matter what it costs to repair, the cost is less than the cost of neglect. No matter what the cost of paint, the wind and the weather will collect a higher bill in deterioration and decay.

Query.—What do you think of paint as an investment, aside from the appearance it lends? Does it really PAY to paint a house regularly, say, every three or four years?

Answer.—Good paint properly applied when needed is the main thing in making a house last long and well. A house worth \$2,500 can be painted at a cost of about \$125. In 50 years that house will need about 15 paintings, the total cost of which will be \$1,875. Left without paint, such a house would fall into complete ruin in 30 years. So taking 50 years as a basis for our figures we find that with paint a home will last that time in good condition and will cost, plus paint, \$1,875. Without paint the house would have to be rebuilt at the end of 30 years and would be ready for another complete repainting when the sixth year arrived. Cost, without paint, \$5,000 for a home ready to fall to pieces. Does regular painting pay? As the old Dutch adage says:

"PAINT PAYS FOR ITSELF."

Query.—I have a quantity of old paint on hand. Can I use it for the first coat in repainting my barn?

Answer.—On no account should old paint which has become fat be used for priming either old or new work. Old paint in that condition is best used in a fence, brickwork or linework. If you value your barn sufficiently to paint it, do it the justice of a good job.

U. S. Invents Anti-Rust "Dope."

Incident to the war, the government has faced the problem that has so long proved baffling to commercial concerns of protecting iron and steel from rust. In an attempt to solve this federal specialists have perfected various forms of protective coatings. In this connection it may be pertinent to ask whether commercial uses will not be found also for the so-called "dopes" which the government has invented to be applied to airplane wings and which are possessed of valuable weather-resisting and fireproof qualities.

EFFECT OF COLOR UPON THE DURABILITY OF PAINT.

Property owners who may have under consideration the painting of dwellings and other structures should remember that more durable results are obtained when tinted paints are used. Permanent coloring materials which have been ground by machine into a high grade white paint base have the effect of preventing "chalking" and "checking," two defects which are often observed when white paints are used.

PRETTY COLOR COMBINATIONS.

Ground Coat	Stipple Coat	Stencil Color
White	Light Rose	Medium, Light Gray
White	Light Gray	Dark Blue, Gray-Green
White	Light Warm Yellow	Light Cobalt Blue, Neutral Gray, Light Gray, Gray-Green or Light Cobalt Blue
Light Gray	Same Gray, a little darker	Blue or Light Orange Yellow
Light Gray	Light Blue	Light Gray, Neutral Drab, Ivory or Grayish
Light Gray	Green	Light Gray, Neutral Drab, Ivory or Grayish
Ivory	Olive Green	Gray, Ivory, Light Warm Drab, Medium Olive, Warm Gray, Cream
Light Colonial Yellow	Light Blue	Dark Blue, Light Ivory, Light Neutral Gray, Brown, Burnt Umber, Cream, Light Tan, Cream, Light Gray Drab
Gold Bronze	Dark Green	
Aluminum Bronze	Blue	
Ivory	Tan	
Ivory	Dark Brown	